

gaming the system to the tune of \$65,000, \$70,000 a year, and that they don't want to work. People want to work, but they are constantly in competition with foreign workers who earn \$3 a day. We are in a postindustrial economy, and often people cannot find work and cannot find enough work to meet their needs.

Often people find work, but those jobs do not provide them, Mr. Speaker, with healthcare. But they are being told that they need to provide a urine specimen and have a drug test to get healthcare simply because they don't have an employer that is able to provide them or willing to provide them with healthcare.

Although the claims, Mr. Speaker, have been refuted time and again with facts and research that poor people have dignity, poor people love their children, but poor people are just not getting a fair shot despite all of this.

Republicans continue to perpetuate this propaganda and these talking points that impose even more obstacles on people who are poor. They continue to promote policies that are humiliating, like the ration or harvest boxes or peeing in a cup and eliminating basic rights of Americans because they are financially poor in the richest country on the planet. We are sick and tired, Mr. Speaker, of being sick and tired.

□ 1030

And why do we think this is happening, Mr. Speaker? We think this is happening, Mr. Speaker, because you yourself, Mr. Speaker, declared that we are going to pay for the \$1.5 trillion tax cut that we just gave to the wealthiest Americans, corporations, shareholders, all over this planet, we are going to pay for them by cutting Medicaid. We are going to pay for them, Mr. Speaker, by cutting Medicare. We are going to pay for them by cutting Social Security. We are going to pay for them by cutting food stamps, thus the need to vilify people who are poor.

Mr. Speaker, how about if we really want to help people escape poverty and reduce dependency on the safety net, how about trying to raise the minimum wage so that people who are having trouble putting food on the table will actually earn enough money to be able to afford to pay for basic food needs?

If we really want to help people escape poverty, why don't we recognize that basic healthcare is a human right? And we should be trying to fortify the Affordable Care Act as opposed to 60, 70 attempts to repeal it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Americans to wake up.

PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS— ANGELS ABROAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, America's Peace Corps volunteers are

our angels abroad. They represent the very best we have in America, but right now, we are not doing enough to protect them.

One volunteer, Jennifer Mamola, her life was forever changed after an accident while she was serving in Uganda. Early one morning, Jennifer was walking with two friends to a bus stop. Out of nowhere, a drunk driver rammed into them; one volunteer was killed and Jennifer's legs were broken.

When she returned home to America, still bedridden and loaded on pain medication, she faced an uphill battle to get treatment because of bureaucracy. After months of fighting the system, she was finally approved for disability, but her nightmare didn't end there. Her case was regularly reopened, and she struggled to get the surgeries she needed and was not always approved. Still traumatized by her experience in Uganda, she reached out for mental health treatment, only to be ignored.

I have heard too many stories like Jennifer's, volunteers eager to make a difference in the world, return home to America, seem to be abandoned by an organization they gave so much for.

Others tell of their struggle to receive quality medical care and protection while they are overseas. A brave volunteer opened up to me about the daily sexual harassment she experienced while serving in a country overseas. During broad daylight, men would grope and threaten her as she walked home from school.

One afternoon at the market, the cashier threatened to break into her house in the middle of the night, come into her bedroom, and sexually assault her. When she reported this to the Peace Corps, they assured her that the men were "simply joking."

The harassment went on for months and months. Finally, she made the decision to return to the United States. She could no longer bear the harassment, and she was threatened and afraid.

Peace Corps recorded her reason for leaving as "difficulty adapting to the culture." Are you kidding me? A culture of sexual assault in a foreign country? This meant she was not awarded the certificate of service or letter from the President of the United States that she earned.

Sexual assault and harassment should never be excused as "joking." It should never be brushed off as a cultural norm. Peace Corps has fostered this belief for too long.

Between 2010 and 2014, there were over 900 reported cases of sexual assault and rape by Peace Corps volunteers overseas. This is unacceptable. Our volunteers deserve protection. They deserve basic protections from bad guys who seek to harm them. They deserve quality medical care, both in country and when they get back to the United States.

Now, the Peace Corps has made some changes, but as a former judge, I can

tell you that it is our duty to do everything within our power to protect our angels abroad and do more.

Peace Corps volunteers are the face of our country in places where America's shining beacon of hope and liberty may not always shine so bright. They promote goodwill, a better understanding of the United States. They do so much for people overseas. This helps to secure an enduring partnership for our Nation. They change lives every day in the local communities that they serve. Their service to this country should not turn into a nightmare that interrupts or even ends their lives.

We must remember that these Peace Corps volunteers, many times, operate alone in remote areas of the world, doing the best they can to help other people.

Simple changes would greatly improve the safety and security of our Peace Corps ambassadors abroad. That is why the bill Representative JOE KENNEDY of Massachusetts and I have introduced—the bipartisan Sam Farr Peace Corps Enhancement Act—is so important.

We must not continue to send our volunteers into remote areas of the globe without adequate protections against harm. They must have access to a qualified medical doctor and an effective healthcare system to take care of them when they come back to the United States.

There are some things that we can do and this bill will help. It is time to stand up and take action for our volunteers. They are some of the best that America has, representing America and the Peace Corps, and it is our responsibility to take care of them.

And that is just the way it is, Mr. Speaker.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 36 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Lord God of mercy, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Our Nation is singular and powerful by the very fact that Congress begins its workday with prayer, setting an example for all students and workers and people of this great land. It has done so from the very beginnings of Congress itself.

By seeking Your presence and wisdom in moments of prayer each day, we humbly lay before You our limitations and our hopes. We display our openness to Your creative light to guide us in the decisions that must be made to stay the course of government of Your free people.

Hear the prayers of this people's House and call each Member to moral integrity and charitable bipartisan political effort that the course of government might roll forward toward advancements of the common good of our Nation.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. FOXX led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

MEDICAL DEBT TAX RELIEF

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, medical debt can be financially crippling, and folks who have been fortunate enough to receive debt forgiveness should not face surprise taxes from the IRS on that debt.

Unfortunately, the current Tax Code is not clear on this issue. Therefore, it is possible for a taxpayer to have their medical debt canceled, but then be required to pay taxes on that forgiven debt as if it were income.

That is plain wrong. To ensure medical debt forgiveness is not a taxable event, last week, I introduced the Medical Debt Tax Relief Act.

I thank Congressman JOHN LARSON for joining me in this effort, and I urge our colleagues to join us both in support of this commonsense legislation.

HONORING THE LIFE OF KATHLEEN DALEY

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Kathleen Daley, a lifelong Riverside resident and a dedicated member of our community who passed away last week.

For more than a decade, I had the privilege of serving with Kathleen on the Riverside Community College District Board of Trustees. And though she was a conservative Republican, and I a progressive Democrat, never did our ideologies keep us from finding common ground when it came to serving our students.

She taught me what it means to work with people who have a different way of seeing things. Her deep understanding of budgeting was vital to lifting the college out of severe financial hardship. Through her service to the college, as well as to many local nonprofit organizations, Kathleen's commitment to our community improved the lives of people across the Inland Empire region.

My condolences go to Kathleen Daley's family and friends.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF BARBARA BUSH

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, like so many others, to honor the memory of Barbara Bush.

She has already been noted in the history books for her place as one of the only two women to be the wife of one President and the mother of another. But for millions of Americans, Barbara Bush's legacy is deeply personal.

As First Lady, she drew attention to the issue of family literacy in a way that resonated with the American public. In her own straightforward and down-to-earth way, she worked to remove the shame and stigma of illiteracy for adults. She knew and believed that children are the future, but she recognized that if a child's parents didn't have basic reading and writing skills, the whole family's future is at risk.

As the House continues to focus on workforce development and closing the skills gap, it is fitting to recognize the voice Barbara Bush gave to that basic cornerstone of all education: the power of reading. She embraced lifelong learning, and the best way to honor her legacy is to do the same.

As chair of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, it is a privilege to honor her memory and her contributions to the work we continue to do every day.

ROSWELL PARK COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, 120 years ago, Dr. Roswell Park founded the first cancer center in America in Buffalo, New York. For the last century, Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center has been a leader in furthering our understanding of cancer and pioneering new patient treatments.

Roswell Park gave the world the first preclinical chemotherapy program, the prostate-specific antigen test, and it is collaborating today with Cuba on a promising new lung cancer vaccine. Herceptin, for metastatic breast cancer, was clinically trialed and tested at Roswell, and new immunotherapy clinical trials are occurring there today.

In addition to promising new treatments, Roswell is home to the compassionate cancer experts for those afflicted with cancer and for those who love the afflicted.

Today, we are urging the National Institutes of Health to renew Roswell Park's well-deserved designation as one of just 49 national cancer centers in the Nation.

New lifesaving and life-quality treatments are within reach at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center.

IMMIGRATION REFORM, TEXAS STYLE

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a recent poll of Texas voters shows that they want to reduce and reform legal immigration and save jobs for Americans.

The Pulse Opinion Research survey found that 63 percent of Texans favor less immigration than the current annual level of 1 million. Notably, 56 percent support cutting the number of green cards by at least half. Only 14 percent of the voters questioned want to increase immigration.

The poll also determined that Texas voters, by a 2-1 margin, want to end chain migration and only admit spouses and minor children of immigrants. Also, respondents strongly support workforce verification to prevent illegal immigrants from taking jobs away from citizens.

Congress should listen to Texans' views on immigration policy. With a 2,000-mile common border with Mexico, Texas continues to bear the burden of our current misguided immigration system.

REMEMBERING FIRST LADY BARBARA BUSH

(Ms. PELOSI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, last night was a sad day for America. Today, our Nation mourns the passing of a beloved American; a bold advocate for family, for literacy; and a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother, First Lady Barbara Bush.